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UNCLAS BRATISLAVA 000821

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AMGT](#) [LO](#)

SUBJECT: Direct Funding Initiative Proposal for Embassy Bratislava Language Program

Ref: State 166935

1. SUMMARY: Embassy Bratislava would like to continue offering Slovak language learning opportunities for eligible family members (EFMs) and State Department officers and specialists who did not receive FSI training, as well as courses to maintain the investment of FSI training put into other officers. We would like to continue on a yearlong basis our post-funded language class program, and supplement this with short immersions in Bratislava and the countryside and a continuation of our video-development series. The total cost of these programs, after Post contribution is accounted for, will be \$21,480, with classes as the highest priority.

2. POINT OF CONTACT FOR THE PROGRAM: Aaron Schwoebel, Post Language Officer, e-mail SchwoebelAM@state.gov, phone (421-2) 5922-3232

3. CURRENT POST LANGUAGE PROGRAM: Bratislava now provides four different level of instruction, each with two hours of class per week. Students are in Beginner, Advanced Beginner, Advanced Intermediate, and Conversational classes. The Beginner and Advanced Beginner classes are EFMs and officers/specialists who had no previous language training, or only the FAST course. Advanced Intermediate students generally came to post with a 2/2 and are trying to maintain or improve their proficiency; Conversational students generally came to post with a 3/3. It is important to note that it is quite easy for officers to fall back on English in Bratislava, and it is vital to provide continued Slovak language training to encourage them to maintain their skills and use them in meetings and public events (especially outside Bratislava) in order to promote goodwill and mutual understanding. Spouses, meanwhile, spend more time among Slovaks and need basic Slovak to get around town, purchase goods for the home, and so on.

4. POST CONTRIBUTION: Post is committed to spending \$6,000 of Program and ICASS funds on the language program, broadly speaking. However, individual lessons for the new Ambassador, who is highly committed to learning Slovak in a short period of time, will at the current rate use \$3,000 of these funds. Therefore, \$3,000 will be put towards the budget items for language classes, immersion, and videos listed below.

5. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROGRAM: Embassy Bratislava does use post funds on the language instruction program, but asks for Direct Funding support in order to keep all class running 12 months a year. Also, we would like to have immersion programs available for non-FSI trained officers and EFMs to enhance post-acquired learning, plus some additional immersions for FSI-trained officers to brush-up on their language skills. Finally, we would like to continue the video series began last FY.

6. TARGET AUDIENCE: Language Classes: Primarily EFMs and employees without language training; also employees who wish to enhance and maintain language skills previously acquired. **Immersions/Field Trips:** EFMs and employees who have gone through some basic language training and want to rapidly build on that in a real-world environment; also employees who wish to enhance and maintain their skills in a dedicated environment. It should be noted that the Marine Security Guards currently pay for their own language class using the same contract-teacher as the PLP.

7. DETAILED BUDGET, LISTED BY PRIORITY:

INSTRUCTION (\$9,480):

Post is using available funds to continue to provide language instruction in Fiscal Year 2006, with an emphasis on beginners (EFMs and officers who did not receive language training at FSI). We would like to continue the program through the summer transfer season, as more officers and EFMs will be arriving, and many new ones have arrived this year and need significant training to master basic interactions. Thus we request funding to augment post resources and keep the classes running 12 months. Classes

would continue to be divided into four levels: Beginner, Advanced Beginner, Advanced Intermediate, and Conversational. \$15 an hour, times 8 hours (2 per class) a week of instruction and a matching 8 hours a week of preparation time = \$12,480 for the year. Post funds will cover approximately \$3,000.

IMMERSIONS AND FIELD TRIPS (\$4,000):

Post would like to maintain a consistent schedule of field trips and immersions during the year, to provide a significant improvement in confidence and in fluency to students studying in the Beginner and Advanced Beginner classes, and to help maintain skills for the Advanced

classes. Field trips, oriented towards encouraging Beginner students in their first few months, would consist of an outing in the company of native speakers, to introduce them to the community. Immersions, oriented towards Beginner students with some vocabulary and grammar under their belts, as well as more advanced students, would range from one to four day trips outside of Bratislava, using Slovak with the teacher and with "real people" in a variety of settings.

VIDEOS (\$8,000):

Last year post contracted to have 8 videos produced of people having standard conversations in Slovak (shopping, restaurant ordering, small talk) in real settings around Slovakia. These were modeled on similar videos produced elsewhere in the region, which covered 16 episodes. The 8 videos have been received recently, and should be widely used in the Embassy community. Although they are expensive, they will be useful for many years to come, and so Post sees value in continuing to program to the completion of the 16 episodes. At \$2,000 each, Post would like to do 4 additional videos this year.

18. Post appreciates the opportunity to submit this proposal for FSI's Post Language Program Direct Funding Initiative, and looks forward to FSI's favorable consideration.

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